

The goods turnover of the port of Smalininkai most strikingly characterizes inland communication; then in the turnover of Memel port transit traffic with Germany (via Tilsit - Ragnit) is also included. On the inland waters downstream chiefly timber, and upstream coal and iron are conveyed. 505

Timber-rafting takes place mainly on the Nemunas and to a lesser extent also on the Neris, Jūra, Minijs, and Nemunėlis. The quantities of round timber, pulp wood and firewood carried on the waterways were as follows (in cubic metres):

1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
206 669	412 902	360 000	473 706	441 396	266 292	468 966

Shipping on the Nemunas to-day serves predominantly inland traffic. In connexion with the regulation of economic relations with Poland, the possibility of increased utilization of these waterways for transit trade is to the fore.

4. Roads and Highways.

In 1918, i.e. at the time of the foundation of the independent Lithuanian State, the total length of roads amounted to 1 190 kilometres, but in this connexion it must be borne in mind that the majority of them were in an almost impassable condition, and that many bridges were destroyed. In 1928 already 1 701 kms. and at the end of 1937, 1 956 kms. were available, of which 1 265 kms. were under the jurisdiction of the State Highways Board and the remainder under that of the local administrations. The total length of roads during twenty years had therefore increased by 766 kms. which had been achieved partly by means of the improvement of old routes and partly by the construction of new ones. In that time a total of 1 247 kms. of roads had been fundamentally repaired, 213.5 kms. newly built, and 937 bridges constructed. The cost of this work amounted to 60 000 000 litas, of which 40 000 000 litas was on account of road and 20 000 000 litas on account of bridge construction. Besides the above-mentioned roads, there are also 31 530 kms. of country roads. The total length of all roads and highways is therefore 33 486 kms. 491 ●

XII. RURAL PLANNING

491 Before the war, only rudimentary means of communication existed. During the hostilities, transport conditions became even worse: the main roads were broken up and the by-roads suffered serious damage. When Lithuania became independent, all the existing roads had to be rebuilt and new means of communication to be provided. Between 1918 and 1937, over 1,000 kilometres of main roads were repaired and over 200 kilometres built. In 1937, there were 1,950 kilometres of main roads. Adding by-roads of the first category (4,365 kilometres) and of the second category (9,300 kilometres), there is a total of 15,000 kilometres of roads — that is, roughly 270 kilometres per 1,000 square kilometres and 60 kilometres per 10,000 inhabitants. The farmer, in addition to the main roads and the by-roads of the first and second categories, can use the by-roads of the third category, connecting villages and isolated farms, so that he usually has adequate means of communication and can always take his produce to the nearest markets. Motor-bus services (a means of communication which is rapidly spreading) make travelling fairly easy. The Government proposes to build 700 kilometres of main roads in the next ten years and to develop and improve the system of by-roads.

621 As regards other questions connected with rural planning, it may be noted that the villages are divided up into separate isolated farms (see II), and that, in four or five years time, built-up villages areas will have ceased to exist. Agriculturists who have left their villages to take up farming on these separate undertakings have to dig wells, but this does not, as a rule, present great difficulties, as drinking-water is found nearly everywhere. 377 Electrification has only just started: at present, regional electric power stations are being set up (the source of energy being peat), and the construction of a large central hydro-electric power station is under consideration. It is possible that the problem of the electrification of the countryside may become a matter of pressing concern in the near future: the drawbacks attaching to the system of scattered and isolated farms will then become apparent.

369 For these isolated farms, the school and church, representing the economic and ideological aspects of organised farming interests, serve as cultural and social centres. Together with the Press and the wireless, they correct such dangers as isolated members of the rural community might otherwise be exposed to from a cultural and social point of view.

1. A land reform program divided former common pasture land into separate farms.